A NEW "BLUE BIRD" PLAY

"The Poor Little Rich Girl" Fascinates

SOMEWHERE ELSE" FAILS

His Wife By His Side" is a Trifle That Makes Little Impression in New York.

By Vanderheyden Fyles

New York, Feb. 1, 1913.
THE POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL"—play of fact and fancy. By Eleanor Gates (Hudson theater).

...... Alan Hale
...... Gene Pollard
...... Natalie Perry
...... Helena Davidge
...... Frank Andrews
...... Grace Griswold
...... Gladys Fairbanks
...... Viola Dana
...... Harry Cowley
...... William S. Lyons
...... Frank Currier
...... Laura Nelson Hall
...... Boyd Nolan
...... Howard Hall
Society Woman ...Amelia Mayhorn
Society Woman......Helen King
Society Woman ......Augusta Scott
Society Man ......Melville Rosenow
Society Man ......James Bryson
Footman
...... Van Rensselaer Townsend
...... Theodore Marston
...... Joseph Bingham
...... Al Grady
...... A. Alphonse
...... A. Alphonse

"SOMEWHERE ELSE"—Musical Fantasy. By Avery Hopwood and Gustav Luders (Broadway theater.)

...... Cecil Cunningham
...... Will Philbrick
...... Elena Leske
...... Taylor Holmes
...... Franklin Farnum
...... Catherine Hayes
Cheerful Executioner......
...... Donald Chalmers
...... Burton Lenihan
Chief Boy Scouts......
...... Marion Whitney
...... Helene W. Davis
...... Edith Warren
...... Ellen Evans
...... Florida Bellaire
...... Rita Bellaire
...... Bixie Murray
...... Alys Baldwin
...... Susie McChroan
...... H. R. Haskell
...... Maxwell Kennedy
...... Martin Conroy
...... Richard Hall
...... Briggs French
...... Dick Stewart
...... Fred M. Fisher
...... H. P. Wagner
...... Mabel Callon
...... Daisy McNally
...... Perry Alvarez
...... Devor Alvarez
...... Doris Ferges
...... Mildred Lawrence
...... Ednah Bernard
Messenger of Dawn......Edith Thayer
Named Cupid......Violet De Biccai
...... Melville Anderson
...... George Healy

"HIS WIFE BY HIS SIDE"—An American comedy in three acts. By Ethelyn Emory Keays. (Berkeley theater.)

...... Elsie Esmond
...... George Marsh
...... Burroughes, M. D. ......
...... Franklin Ritchie
...... Nanette Comstock
...... Robert Drouet
...... Bannister Haines......
...... Frank Weston
...... George W. Barnum
...... Leona Ball

"CONDOTTIERI"—A drama in four acts. By Rudolf Herzog. (Irving Place theater.)

...... Coleone
...... Rudolf Christians
...... Max Jurgens
...... Otto Stoeckel
...... Willie Frey
...... Beatrice ...... Anna Fuehring
...... Heinrich Marlow
...... Isabella ...... Marie Ruhrke
...... Ernst Robert
...... August Meyer-Eigen
...... Heinrich Falk
...... Paul Dietz
...... Louis Practorius
...... Ernst Auerbach

"MY FRIEND TEDDY"—A comedy in ... acts. By Andre Rivoire and ... Besnard. (Irving Place theater.)

...... Heinrich Marlow
...... Mathilde Brandt
...... Rosa Lichtenstein
...... August Meyer-Eigen
...... D'Allonne ...... Christian Rub
...... Rudolf Christians
...... Otto Stoeckel
...... Theodule Boucher......
...... Marie Ruhrke
...... Annie Rub-Foerster
...... Elize Gardner
...... Constance von Zeckendorf
...... Ernst Robert
...... Ernst Auerbach
...... Cenzi Goetzer
...... Louis Praetorius

... may as well know from the ... that I have nailed myself ... my chair, lest I hit the ceiling ... enthusiasm and delight over ... Poor Little Rich Girl." Nothing charming and freshly imaginative has come to New York since "The Blue Bird", and while it lacks ... the significance and poetry ... fantasy, it warms one with ... humor, with tender sentiment ... not maudlin, and with the ... of health and novelty. But ... of mere praise; let me rather ... convey an idea of the play itself, pausing only to mention that its ... marks the debut among ... of Eleanor Gates, who is ... wife of Richard Walton Tully, author of "The Bird of Paradise", and ... introduces her as brilliantly as "The Governor's Lady" made it ... that Alice Bradley was a woman to be reckoned with.

The poor little rich girl is the lonely daughter of a broker who is always somewhere "down town" ... among the bears, or grinding ... money to finance her mother's ... ambitions. The parents never ... time for her, leaving her to a ... and French and German ... dancing teachers, and to the servants. She never is allowed to play ... other children; and when she ... out must sit primly in the motor with her governess. But she remembers one glorious day in the ... when she ran away to the ... and took off her shoes and ... and waded in a stream ... an unknown boy named John ... and his big dog romped about ... them and wagged his tail, and ... Sometimes, in the huge, ... mansion, Gwendolyn "pretends ... all over, by herself; and ... she beckons a kind old organ-grinder in from the street and he ... the dog, and the plumber's assistant, too, joins the game, but both ... are routed by the servants. For the ... part, Gwendolyn is just a silent, ... little listener. But she ... and remembers. The ... say her governess is a ... in the grass; and the footman ... her maid is double-faced; and ... behind his back the woman calls him ... and says he murders the King's English.

One night—Gwendolyn's eighth birthday—she is allowed to come ... the drawingroom for a few minutes, to meet her mother's dinner guests, and to receive her birthday cake. Coming down too soon, she meets her parents' former physician, who brought her into the world; and he talks to her very gently, noting how pale her cheeks are and how wistful her large eyes. She does not know who he is, but he makes her laugh by telling her he has hobbies—Fresh Air, and Exercise, and the Country,—and that he rides them, too; and the doctor becomes the girl's first friend. Later, shut off by a curtain as she stands in a window to wave to the organ-grinder, she overhears her parents' shallow guests discussing them, saying her papa is simply made of money and that her mother is nothing but an upstart, who has the society bee buzzing in her bonnet. Later, after blowing out the candles on her cake, she sets off to bed, with her teddy-bear in her arms. Her governess has secured permission to go out for the evening. The maid detailed to wach in her room wants to go off to the theatre with a policeman; and to rid herself of her charge, she doses her with a sleeping-draught, overdoses her, in fact. The child becomes dizzy and collapses before reaching her bed; and the doctor is called from the diningroom; and her parents are agitated; and there is great commotion. But it all fades from the little girl. And the room fades away, too; and we are in a beautiful forest, on the grass and through the stream of which the child dances in the exuberance of freedom.

AFTER that, the most wonderful things happen. Gwen wanders into the Tell Tale Forest, where everyone is revealed as he truly is. The footman's ears have grown to be tremendous; and presently the King's English appears, in the form of a stalwart guardsman. And the men fall to fighting, the King's English with his sword and the footman with similarly long tongue, the combatants bellowing angrily with each other. "I done it!" cries the servant; "I did it!" retorts the guardsman. "I seen it!" the flunkey hurls back; "I saw it!" protests the King's English. Finally, the man with the long tongue succeeds in murdering the King's English. But much more that is marvelous occurs. The double-faced maid dances in, and now she literally has two faces, closely alike, one on the front and the other on the back of her head. Asked why she pirouettes continually, she explains she is dancing attendance. The organ-grinder is there, too, adding three synonymous words to each remark, like the definitions in the bothersome old dictionary; and the teddy-bear has grown big and talks; and the little bird who tells things appears and chatters, too. Mamma's dinner guests appear as shadows, moving and speaking in unison, and saying precisely the same thing. And Gwendolyn learns that they are They Say.

THROUGH all this there seems to hum a strange, unseen confusion. Everyone is vaguely anxious about the little girl. The doctor is very grave, and swears to "pull her through." He is continually holding a long, narrow thing to her head; and anxiously examining the numbers on it, muttering 98, or 97, or a wee bit less. Gwen marvels that she should have grown so tall. Papa and Mamma are very anxious, too. Papa is now literally made of money; but he is harnessed to a machine, which makes his shoulders stoop, and out of which he incessantly grinds money. His little girl has heard that he makes ducks and drakes of his money, and presently four great big ducks and drakes scamper out of the machine, cackling words that have no meaning. For would you believe it?—the ducks and drakes are no other than the tiresome German teacher, and French teachers, and music teacher, and dancing master. But through it all, the greatest anxiety seems to turn to Gwen's mamma, whose wild eyes gaze hypnotically on the bee buzzing in her bonnet. It is the society bee. And the good doctor seems to feel he cannot pull the little girl through unless her mother gives it up forever.

WITH this declaration, things become more feverish and excited. Passing through a sort of wheat field that really is a huge birthday-cake with thousands of yellow candles all alight, Gwen reaches Robin Hood's barn. They Say and the ducks and drakes, and her own mother, are going 'round and 'round the barn. But the doctor, who has carried Gwen in his arms, stops the mother in her mad pursuit. He implores her to give up the bee. And papa appeals to her; and the teddy-bear begs, too. At last, seeing how pale and weak her little girl is growing, she renounces the bee. And what do you think? It buzzes right into the cap of the plumber's assistant! Off he goes, around Robin Hood's barn, with his eyes grown bright and keenly gazing at the bee; and followed by They Say and the ducks and drakes, all chattering and cackling at his heels.

THEN everything grows brighter. The doctor looks at the numbers on his funny sort-of-stick and cries aloud in joy; though that is queer, because she does not seem to register as tall as a little time ago. Then he flings open the doors of Robin Hood's barn; and mamma and papa and Teddy and all the good people go in with him. All but Gwendolyn. That's mean, too, for inside wooden horses are going round and round to a tinkly tune, just like in her birthday present from papa. And guess what happens? He takes her hands and lifts her right up, and pulls her through. That's what he meant, then, when he swore he'd pull her through. Then the doors of the barn swing open and the wooden horses slide out into the open air, with mamma and papa on them, and Teddy and the good people, and Gwen herself; all laughing and cheering as they ride the doctor's hobbies.

IN the last act, Gwen is tucked up in her little bed, with Teddy in her arms and the merry-go-round on a nearby table. The good doctor declares all danger past; but papa and mamma, who are seated at either side of the bed, assure him they will take Gwen to the country. And she shall be with them as much as she likes. Then they darken the room, that she may rest; and we leave the rich little girl romping in a field, with a little boy and a great big barking dog, with mamma and papa near, happy in their nearness. For it's the road to Johnny Blake's.

ICOULD tell you a great deal of the acting was pretty poor and that much more might have been accomplished scenically; but I won't. What are actors and scenery compared to such a play as this? Especially as little Miss Violet Dana embodies the title role so nearly to perfection that the little rich girl seems to live and to hold a place in our hearts. At the end of the second act, when all the good people had ridden off triumphantly, astride the doctor's hobbies, the audience called the authoress before the footlights and cheered her loudly, though quite as much from pent-up emotion as in recognition of an exceptionally novel, humorous and human fantasy.

There comes a time, at metropolitan premieres, when one does not say this is good or bad, or this rather good or rather bad; but simply shakes one's head and says "I can't believe it." Such a time arrived with "Somewhere Else." Not that there is not always hope—especially in loosely put together musical entertainments—of revamping them into jolly "shows." "The Sun Dodgers," when shown in New York, was pretty poor stuff, and was received as such. But that genius of extravaganza, Lew M. Fields, got to work on it, and also engaged such performers as Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth, and surprised every one by "pulling off" in Chicago one of the genuine "hits" of the season. All of which is pertinent as showing "there is hope"—even for "Somewhere Else." But the marvel remains that three such men as Henry W. Savage, Avery Hopwood and Gustav Luders should have played with their reputations by bringing such a thing to town. In the last dozen years Colonel Savage probably has had more successes and fewer failures than any other single manager, aside from such popular favorites as "Seven Days" and "Nobody's Widow," Mr. Hopwood has a distinguished success d'estime in "This Man and This Woman;" and no one has contributed more agreeably to the lighter taste for music than Gustav Luders. Yet all were involved in as complete a failure as I have ever seen in a New York theater. Nay, more—the programme tells us the costumes were designed by Hy. Meyer, than whom there are few, if any, cleverer cartoonists living; yet a more unsightly and meaningless lot of dresses have not been seen within my memory outside a college boys' "show."

AT ONE time, I thought that was what "Somewhere Else" was. The prima donna, with her massive shoulders and feminine fascinations, was suspiciously like Smith, '15. But, on the whole, the affair was more like something we used to see about fifteen years ago, when E. E. Rice would come upon a job lot of costumes, compose a few "waltzy" tunes and get J. Cheever Goodwin to write a "fantastic book" around the collection. Mr. Hopwood takes a yacht-load of singing young men (and, incidentally, us) to a magic island where all sorts of comic opera things occur. Tables whirl at will; a statue of Truth creaks when anyone blandly lies; the most extravagant wishes are fulfilled upon the thought. All of which is legitimate material, if mixed with imagination. But fancy is as lacking in the play as common sense. The latter was visible only in a French bull, who was chained onto the stage while a small German prima donna sang. Her voice was large, however. So was her assurance. At first the dog looked at her in astonishment and dismay. He cocked his ears to convince himself he heard what we heard. He wagged his tail a few times in a sort of meek apology and appeal. Then he sank down limply put his head between his paws and went to sleep. Would that we might have done so, too.

"Somewhere Else" will live up to its title, and without delay. The somewhere else will be a storehouse.

SYDNEY ROSENFELD, who can point with pardonable pride to a long record of dramatic output of a generally successful and often excellent quality, is still in a "state of mind." He is prone to feel very badly about the condition of the stage. He has felt badly about the matter many years. Most of us who were in a mood to worry with him and indorse his protests a dozen or so years ago consider his grievance obsolete; regard the stage as much improved artistically; indeed, maintain that it has reached a reasonably satisfactory level. But Mr. Rosenfeld is still surcharged with as loud and tearful a flow of lamentations as Electra. Perhaps I should say, as Electra or Wilton Lackaye. For Mr. Rosenfeld has become the very Lackaye of dramatists. He still forms societies, and addresses them, with or without "collation." The moderate membership fee includes admission to Mr. Rosenfeld's Sunday evening arraignments of "commercial managers," as well as performances of new American plays by the "National Federation of Theater Clubs." Indeed, at the latest meeting, Mr. Lackaye himself played Chorus to Mr. Rosenfeld's Electra, telling of the case of an actor who was so nauseated by the role assigned to him by a "commercial manager" that he gave it up as soon as he had earned enough to pay his week's board. Not having been "among those present," I cannot say whether Mr. Lackaye repeated his favorite illustration, now almost as venerable as "The Old Homestead," about his dramatization of "Les Miserables," which "no manager could pronounce the title of, let alone produce." William A. Brady must regret that he disproved the truth of the actor's pet epigram; his production of the Lackaye version of "Les Miserables" was one of the most dire failures in his successful career.

BUT I seem to have wandered from the subject of Mr. Rosenfeld, or, in any case, to have fallen into a slightly quarrelsome tone; whereas my feeling toward him and his enterprise is extremely cordial. Any intelligent movement toward the production of serious American plays is to be commended. The only point on which I take issue with Mr. Rosenfeld is the implication that native managers refuse on principle to give a hearing to native dramatists, thus forcing them into authorial associations to get their work before the public. That evil did exist a dozen years ago, and one or two of the older managers still adhere, almost exclusively, to imported drama. But what about the maiden plays of Edward Sheldon, Rachel Crothers, Eugene Walter, Avery Hopwood, Edward Locke, Edward Knoblauch, Percy Mackaye, Josephine Preston Peabody, A. E. Thomas, Thompson Buchanan and the late William Vaughan Moody?—to name only the most conspicuous of the first-rate American dramatists who have received ready hearing while still young. Mr. Rosenfeld's only mistake is that he has grown so fond of his ancient lamentation, once so true and pertinent and poignant, that he has kept on chanting it without realizing the passage of time and customs.

ETHELYN EMORY KEAYS'S comedy called "His Wife by His Side," the second production by the National Federation of Theater clubs, is bad only in the sense that it is not good. It might better be described as almost nothing, or, in any case, as about the least thing that could be divided into acts, surrounded by scenery and spoken by actors, and, therefore, called a play. Such merit as it has lies in its occasionally clever dialogue. The plot, handled rather clumsily, is agreeable and human, and it is excellent for the theater. The only trouble on that point is that half a hundred dramatists appreciated the fact before Mrs. Keays did. One might make the blunder of charging her with having boldly taken her piece from Haddon Chambers's "The Tyranny of Tears," did it not resemble "The Mollusc," by Hubert Henry Davies, quite as closely. Numerous other comedies might be cited as very near of kin, to say the least. But for my part, I have no doubt Mrs. Keays hit on her story without a thought—perhaps without even the knowledge—of the Chambers or the Davies piece. A young physician (Robert Drouet) is considerably bothered by the babyish and insistent demands of his affectionate wife (Nanette Comstock). She wants his attention every moment. When she observes that his trained nurse, who also acts as her husband's secretary, is congenial to his ambitions and a help to them, she becomes furiously jealous. She demands the dismissal of the woman, and when her husband refuses, ridiculing the idea of any sentimental bond between them, the wife herself departs. She takes refuge with her father. But when a bachelor friend of her husband, the man who points out the tyranny of the wifely tears to him, wins the love and hand of the nurse, the petulant wife returns.

ANNA FUEHRING, who is a baroness when she isn't working, Rudolf Christians and Mathilde Brandt are continental stars—or would be, if the German stage recognized such a thing; the point being simply that, where stationary stock companies prevail, the actor of exceptional note simply travels from his home troupe, now and again, and plays with a company in another city "as guest." The Baroness Strantz-Fuehring, Mr. Christians and Miss Brandt are making such visits to New York now, each guest remaining long enough to augment the company for the next, the baroness making her debut in the title role of the drama known to us as "Magda," and remaining for Mr. Christian's appearance in "Condottieri," while he has semi-effaced himself for Miss Brandt's introduction i n"My Friend Teddy." The last named plays are both new to this country.

If Rudolf Herzog, who visited America as a lecturer last year, had written "Condottieri" before the death of Richard Mansfield there would have been less reason to feel confident it will never reach America in English. That actor was ever in search of an historical character that might be utilized for the display of his histrionic ability and pictorial genius in some neo-classic tragedy. This study of the last days of Bartolomeo Coleone, the fifteenth century general who defended the republic of Venice against the Duke of Burgundy, is interesting only as an exceptionally "showy" opportunity for the actor; unless, perhaps, to a student of the history of the period. Of consecutive drama there is almost none. The first act reached its climax with a passionate love scene between Coleone and Madonna Isabella. The second concerns itself with his determination to appear before the council of the Ten and make his own terms upon which he will continue to lead the republic's land attacks on the Duke of Burgundy. The actor's greatest opportunity, however, comes in the third act. The warrior is at the point of death. His face is pallid; his body seems to shrink visibly beneath the brave array of armor and state trappings. He is carried before the council in a large chair, attended by his son. But he rises to a vigorous defiance of his enemies, and at the very pinnacle he sinks back dead. In the last act the lifeless body of the general lies in state, a stream of light from a broad window illuminating his colorless face. To this silent form Madonna Beatrice, who has come upon it suddenly, not knowing that the lover of her youth was dead, pours out her love. That scene is all the Baroness Strantz-Fuehring has to do, but she does it very well. Mr. Christian's varied, skillful and authoritative embodiment of the warrior, which part he "created" when the drama was first acted in Berlin, explains—and very largely justifies—its importation.

FROM that to "My Friend Teddy," from a near-Schiller tragedy to a modern French farce. Mr. Christians is versatile, to say the least. In spite of its title and the fact that its principal character is an American abroad, Andre Rivoire and Lucien Besnard's frolic does not contain a single bull moose, or a Big Stick, or a set of teeth. Teddy is just an ordinary, genial, good-natured American; or, perhaps, I should say, extraordinary, for it is unusual to find one of our people introduced in a foreign play without absurd exaggeration, frequently, indeed, in caricature disdainful to the point of malice. Let us hope the times are changing. "Our Friend Teddy" is enjoying great success in Paris and throughout Germany. And that leads me to my reason for telling you its story only to the extent of saying it concerns the interference of the American between a vulgar French politician and his cruel treatment of his wife, the husband's "affair" with the widow of an ex-president of France being the scandal of paris. For why not wait until the farce reaches us in English, which is sure to be soon?—though we will miss Mr. Christian's amusing and surprisingly successful attempt to speak German with an American accent. Mathilde Brandt, the third "guest," plays the maltreated wife with rather exceptional charm and delicacy of method.

"A Sample of My Best Work" By Nell Brinkley

This is a sample of the best work of the Maker of Love Affairs—"Just before the kiss, and after she's whispered 'Yes!'"

UP BESIDE the very gates of Pharais, which is Paradise, haloed and winged in the light of rosy clouds, sits the Maker of Love Affairs. He's a little chap who's bad tales and tales told of him. Even I have most humbly used up all the pretty words I know while I tried to 'splain his loveliness to you.

But, really, when you get right down to the beautiful, naked truth, he's just three things besides plain Beauty—plump, and cruel, and a snare!

Sounds pretty bad, but his knees are so pink that you forget his poisoned arrows and his hardened heart!

But the thing he is best and most is an artist in color and line. Well known are his sentimental cartoons. They make hard fellows soft to look at them, and they send soft fellows to looking about quick for a girl of their own. Always a man and a maid—a man and a maid—are his cartoons—his creations, if you will. Here is a sample of his best work. "Just before the kiss and after she's whispered 'Yes.'"

NELL BRINKLEY.

Mason and Slidell

By REV. T. B. GREGORY.

IT WAS exactly fifty-one years ago—January 2, 1862—that Mason and Slidell, the confederate commissioners just released by the federal authorities, sailed for Europe.

The "Trent affair," one of the most critical in which the United States government was involved during the civil war, will always stand associated with the queerest and smartest piece of diplomatic juggling known in history.

On the eighth day of November, 1861, John Slidell and James M. Mason, diplomatic agents of the Confederate States to England and France, were on board the British merchant ship Trent on their way from Havana to Liverpool, when they were held up by Captain Wilkes of the United States war vessel San Jacinto, forcibly taken from the Trent, returned to the United States and delivered up to the government authorities at Boston by whom they were imprisoned in Fort Warren, in Boston harbor.

At once the British government got "ousy," furiously resented the "insult" to its flag and demanded an immediate and thorough-going "apology," with the release of the imprisoned commissioners.

Secretary Seward realized that he was in a bad fix. He knew perfectly well that the people of the United States were in no frame of mind for an apology to England, and yet he felt, and could not help feeling, that something bordering pretty close on an apology was not only due but inevitable.

Wilkes had blundered, and blundered badly, in taking the commissioners from the Trent, and some sort of acknowledgement of the fact had to be made.

Not only so, but a war with England at that time was a thing not to be thought of. The hope of the north lay, and with reason, in the blockade. If the southern ports could be kept sealed up, thus preventing exports and imports, the southern cause must ultimately die of sheer inanition; but with the British navy to contend with how would it be possible to maintain the blockade?

All of these things Seward had to think of—and govern himself accordingly. How well he performed his most difficult task all the world knows. It was perhaps the cleverest piece of diplomacy that the world has ever seen. With the greatest statesman and most skillful diplomats of Europe pitted against him, Seward accomplished the seemingly impossible task of apologizing without apologizing, and surrendering without surrendering.

With the tact that would have put Metternich, Talleyrand, or even Machiavelli himself, to the blush, Seward played his game of "thimble-dig" so perfectly that he was able to satisfy both sides of the controversy, and that without lowering his country's flag an inch, or in any way compromising its dignity or honor.

Lord Lyons was satisfied, the British people were satisfied, the people of the north were pleased, and pleased also were even the southern people for their commissioners, gracefully released by Seward, were soon on their way to perform their duties as the Confederacy's agents in Europe.

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